

NARO MINDED

A Publication of the Northern Anomalies Research Organisation

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UNHOLY FLAMES?

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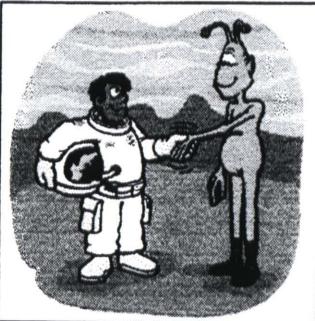
**THE ALTERNATIVE A-Z OF THE
PARANORMAL**

EDWARDIAN SUPER-AIRSHIPS!

MEN IN ANORAKS

URMSTON MAN SEES SPACE TREE

**GROUP THERAPY: YOUR GUIDE TO
FLYING SAUCER INVESTIGATORS**



COMMENT

Each issue, NARO members will give their personal opinion on a paranormal topic that's getting them hot under the collar....

Regular readers will have noticed that we at NARO Minded are making quite an effort to be less gullible than the writers of many UFO fanzines that we could mention. This does not mean 'skepticism' in the American sense; it does mean, however, that we require more than constant recycling of the same old paranoid rubbish from ufology in particular. The evidential standards that seem to satisfy many modern ufologists seem consistently lower than for any other area of paranormal research. Perhaps ufology is 'market led' as Jenny Randles has recently pointed out, the ETH now means big bucks. We can hardly blame the humble UFO anoraks (see this issue) for wanting to jump on the gravy train by imagining 'abductions' aplenty! Serious research means using the critical faculties while still retaining a sense of wonder in the face of the mysterious - it doesn't mean buying spin-off merchandise from second rate 'international' organisations. It doesn't mean denying obvious historical facts, such as what happened in the Sea of Tranquillity in July 1969. It means accepting that, fifty-years on from Kenneth Arnold, it makes more sense to believe that ufology's problems have more to do with the egos of ufologists than they do with all embracing, CIA fuelled inter governmental conspiracies. Then again, we might be wrong - if only there was a single shred of convincing *evidence* for the physical reality of most UFO cases. Alicia Leigh writes about such evidence - but as she says, the jury is still out.....

Mervyn Gale

Andrew Blunn

We are always looking for articles for publication in **NARO MINDED**. Please send your articles, comments or cartoons to:

NARO Minded

41 Somerset Rd, Droylsden, Manchester, M43 7PX

Articles should preferably be typed. NARO reserve the right to edit articles.

THE NORTHERN ANOMALIES RESEARCH ORGANISATION

NARO was formed in 1963 in response to a growing interest in the UFO phenomenon. Indeed until recently it was called MUFORA - the Manchester UFO Research Association. This was appropriate at a time when UFOs were perceived to be 'nuts and bolts' spacecraft. In recent years the membership has become all to aware of the psychic dynamics present in many UFO experiences. Entity encounters in particular share a number of common features with non-UFO phenomena such as Near-Death Experiences (NDEs). In recognition of this, MUFORA changed to the Northern Anomalies Research Organisation in January 1994 and became affiliated to the Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena (ASSAP). NARO is composed of around 20 members from all walks of life, who investigate claims of the paranormal on a part-time basis. Membership is strictly regulated and there is currently a waiting list. Only activists need apply, NARO is not a talking shop.

The aims of the organisation are as follows:

To investigate with a view to finding rational explanations for alleged phenomena where appropriate.

To document cases for research purposes.

To educate the media and the public of the subtleties and complexities of the paranormal.

To convince the scientific community of the objective reality of some cases of phenomena.

To a lesser or greater degree these aims are already being achieved. NARO has around 2000 cases on file and scientists regularly give NARO their expertise. The latter demonstrates a shift in attitude regarding anomalies that appear to defy rational explanation.

Peter A. Hough - Chairman

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WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN NARO?

If you are interested in becoming a member of NARO then please contact the Secretary, Andrew Blunn, for an application form:

Andrew Blunn

NARO

41 Somerset Road

Droylsden

Manchester

M43 7PX

or e-mail at:

andrew.p.blunn@stud.umist.ac.uk

Membership is strictly regulated. Successful applicants will be invited to join on a three month trial basis after which full membership may or may not be granted. Members should be able to attend regular meetings in the centre of Manchester. NARO is now operating a postal investigator training course. For more details contact the Secretary at the above address.

On Friday 7th March, Alicia, Mervyn and I were guests on the **James Stannage Show** on **Piccadilly 1152AM**. We would like to thank them for the hospitality they showed us, and for making us feel welcome - and for easing our nerves! **Andrew, Alicia and Mervyn.**

PHANTOM AIRSHIPS

Peter Hough concludes his article with a look at the mysterious phantom airships of the turn of the century...

Although the bulk of unearthed reports of unidentified airships stem from North America, this phenomenon was not confined to the USA. Newspaper stories have also been discovered here in Britain. Indeed, one speculates that if similar searches of newspaper files were made in other parts of the world, the airship phenomenon might turn out to be a global manifestation.

A classic case comes from Wales, with most of the details being supplied by Carl Grove.

The **South Wales Daily News** of May 20th 1909, referred to several Cardiff dock workers who had sighted an airship in the early hours of the previous Wednesday morning.

"Mr C Lethbridge of Newtown, Cardiff emphatically assured one of our representatives that on Tuesday evening while walking over Caerphilly Mountain, "I saw a sight which frightened me, and which at first I thought was a big bird." Lethbridge is an elderly man of quite demeanour. He has a little *Punch & Judy* show, in which he travels about the country in the summer. He left Senghenydd with his show, on a handtruck for Cardiff, and he reached the summit of Caerphilly Mountain when he saw the sight which frightened him. "I saw" said Lethbridge, "A funny looking object on the roadside, and two men who seemed to be at some kind of work close by. The object was long and like a big cigar. The men - two officers, were - " "officers? what made you think they were officers?" "Well they were tall men, military looking men, they were dressed in thick fur coats and fur caps. Of course I didn't know they were officers, but they were two men - that's certain, and military looking men too."

"How close did you get to them?" "I was

about twenty or thirty yards away when I first saw the men. The noise of my truck - it rattles a lot - must have disturbed them, for they commenced to speak very fast, some kind of lingo which I could not understand. They appeared to pick something off the ground and jump into the big object close by. Then it rose up like - like a switch back movement, and when it had got up a pretty good height it went straight in the direction of Cardiff." "What did you think it was?" "I don't know. They frightened me. I thought first it was some big bird, but it must have been an airship." "What made you think that?" "Well, after it had gone up a way two lights began to shine from it. They looked like electric lights. It made an awful noise - a - whirring noise, and - "

The press man had heard of that whirring noise. What did Mr Lethbridge mean by it?

"Well - " he answered slowly, " a noise like an engine working. Saw and heard it! I have no doubt about it, I was frightened I can tell you, and after watching it go away towards Cardiff I continued to walk home"

"Such is the story as related by Mr Lethbridge of his strange experience between 10.30 and 11 o' clock on Tuesday night, and it receives confirmation by the statements of residents in Salisbury Road, Cathays, Cardiff that ' between 10.40 and 10.50 they saw an object in the air which looked like an airship.'

The newspaper account goes on to narrate the testimonies of other witnesses

to the object sighted during those hours. From the vague description Lethbridge gives of the object; "*the object was long and like a big cigar*", this fits in with hundreds of eyewitness reports encountered today. Lethbridge presumed it was a phantom airship because of the other stories around at that time, and the appearance of the two 'officers'. A study of these accounts shows that any anomalous light or object which was seen was automatically presumed to be an airship. Just as today such UFOs which remain of exotic origin are labelled as extraterrestrial. It is presumptuous, but an attitude which is fostered heavily by the media.

A search was mounted on Caerphilly Mountain at the location, and a red label printed in French was discovered along with a piece of mutilated notepaper and several slips of paper, but these only served to confuse the issue.

The Caerphilly encounter was far from being an isolated incident but was part of a huge flap over several months. On the 21st May 1909, **The East Anglian Daily Times** came up with this caption: "*Britain Invaded! Airships in East Anglia, Wales, and Midlands. Phantom Fleet. Norwich and Southend Paid a Visit.*"

A precis of the article which followed, was uncovered through the patience of researcher Carl Grove.

"*The Airship fleet which is invading England had a busy night on Wednesday. We speak of a fleet because, according to correspondents there must be not only one, but half a dozen mysterious cigar-shaped machines with quivering lights and whirring mechanisms flitting about the country by night. Wednesday nights observers report manifestations at such widely divergent points as : Southend-on-Sea, Birmingham, Norwich, Tasburgh, Wroxham and Pontypool.*"

"*The mysterious airship has been seen in London. The fact has leaked out under extraordinary circumstances. The Aeronautical Society of Great Britain received a postcard on Thursday stating that a number of railwaymen at West Green had noticed a mysterious airship. They*

state they saw the airship on Friday last. The names of two of the men a George Walden and Joseph Cooper. Seen by a London Evening News representative Walden said:

"Yes it is quite true, we saw an airship. It was about 3.30am last Friday morning. We were at work coupling some trucks in the sidings. Suddenly my mate, Cooper, said "Whats that?", pointing to a strange looking object in the sky. "It looks like a policeman's truncheon, doesn't it?" I replied. "Yes, or a big cigar." It was travelling at a fast pace from the North East. There were no lights attached to it. We were quite clear that it could not have been a cloud, as it was too regular in shape. It was also a very clear and cloudless night."

"A Southend correspondent telegraphs that on Wednesday evening at dusk, an airship was observed at a considerable height between Southend and Shoeburyness. It manoeuvred about for some time until darkness set in, and then disappeared."

"Mrs Turner, of Norwich, was returning from the theatre on Wednesday night, and gives the following description of what happened about 11.30: "As I came into my street, a flash of light came on me all of a sudden, and made the street look like day. There were two young people in the street - a youth standing near his bicycle, next to a young lady. I heard one of them say: 'Whats that?' I could hear a noise like the whirring of wheels. I looked up, and there I saw a big star of light in front and a big searchlight behind. It was flying very low, so low that it would have touched the pinnacle of Angel Road School had it passed directly over it!"

"Mr Chatten, a grocer's assistant was cycling home to the parish of Thurston about midnight on Wednesday night, when , he says; "I was dazzled by a bright light shining from right above me. The trees and hedges were lit brilliantly. I have seen a naval searchlight at Harwich, and I suppose that what I saw was something of that sort, but

but there was a bluish tinge about it, and it did not appear as strong as the naval lights. It seemed to be switched off after only a few seconds. Getting off my bicycle I saw a long cigar shaped object. It was soaring upwards, the tapering end going foremost and was moving rapidly in the direction of Norwich. On the underside was what what I should call a bar, supporting a sort of framework, a yellow light shining at each end."

"A Pontypool correspondant telegraphs that a mysterious airship was sighted at Pontypool on Wednesday evening by a number of people, including Mr Gath Fisher, architect, and his wife, who assert that it was cigar shaped, and that it had a powerful light at each end. Men on night duty at Pontypool town forge declare that the airship floated over the forge and then darted off in another direction, frantically at right angles to that from which it arrived. It disappeared in the direction of Herefordshire. The airship carried a large sheet of canvas and a powerful light. Post Office officials and workmen corroborate the story."

"For several nights people living in Small Heath, a suburb of Birmingham, have seen what is stated to be an airship passing over the district. It is described as cigar-shaped, but carried no light."

Of course the reports did not end there, but returned again, most notably during the beginning of 1913. But what explanations were put forward to explain these mystery airships in this pre-space age era?

Modern UFO devotees will not be surprised to hear that the military and astronomical bodies were high on the list. Particularly in Britain, the airships were presumed to be secret German reconnaissance ships. However, Arnold Lupton MP for Sleaford, and an explosives expert, sought to put peoples minds at rest regarding a possible air attack, by pointing out it would need 10000lbs of dynamite to destroy the Bank of England. As this would necessitate a huge fleet of airships, it obviously was not on, he stated in the *South Wales Daily News*, 20th May 1909.

How times change!

In the **Nottingham Daily Express**, of 26th February 1913, in part, the following appears.

"In regard to the airships said to have been seen near Selby, Yorkshire. A glance at a map shows us Hambleton West-to-South, and Leeds West of Selby. These are precisely the azimuths of the planet Venus at the time given. Venus is now particularly bright and suddenly appearing and disappearing behind wind-blown clouds, she gives the illusion desired. To hear the 'engines', shut your eyes, and a motor car will rarely fail you. All the same it's rough on dear old Venus."

Quite right, but it must have been even rougher on those witnesses who were convinced they had seen anything but the planet Venus!

But there was another option at the turn of the century, an age steeped in the heady fiction of Jules Verne and H.G.Wells - the option of the private inventor.

In the USA, this idea proliferated encouraged by the media, and fostered by the phenomenon itself. A character called Dr E.H Benjamin confided to friends and relatives he had constructed an airship near Oroville. The press began to hound him, and even his solicitors believed the story. Collins, a prominent San Francisco lawyer, claimed to have seen the airship - some 150 feet long - ascend to about 90 feet under perfect control. The tail grew, although the only thing established with certainty was that Benjamin was a dentist from Maine.

There was also a man called Wilson. According to witnesses in parts of Texas and Louisiana, a pilot aboard an airship had introduced himself as a Mr Wilson. During one of the encounters, Wilson mentioned an acquaintance named Captain Akers. When Akers was questioned, he admitted he had known a man of that name in 1876 and 1877,

who was working as an aerial navigator. But the enigmatic Mr Wilson was heard of no more.

The great airship sightings around the turn of the century are a source of continuing intrigue. No doubt celestial bodies and the occasional sighting of *real* aerial vehicles must account for some of the sightings. But the bulk must remain unidentified, just as post-war UFOs defy an across-the-board explanation.

An ability to travel at vast speeds, to hover, and to display brilliant searchlights, did not come about until decades later. And if they were the product of secret eccentric inventors, what happened to all these wondrous machines? They seemed to disappear off the face of the Earth.



THE NARO FILES 2

FEATURING
PETER HOUGH
JENNY RANDLES
JOHN HALL

AND THE NARO TEAM

DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED SOON
SEE FUTURE ISSUES OF **NARO MINDED**
OR CONTACT

Andrew on: 0161 370 5694

e-mail: andrew.p.blunn@stud.umist.ac.uk

Dealer enquiries to: Alicia on 0161 848 0953

JESSE MARCEL WILL NOT BE APPEARING!

IN YOUR AREA

Andrew Blunn presents a frank guide to research groups active throughout the North-West

In the past few years there has been an explosion in the number of paranormal "research" groups throughout the country ;the North-West in particular seeing an exponential growth in such groups. The groups vary from the scientifically open-minded, to the 'nuts and bolts' ETH UFO Fan club.

I hope that this guide will help potential members decide which of the plethora of acronyms will look good on their membership badge.

Manchester UFO Research Network (MUFORN)

Contact: David Atkinson on 0161 795 4140

In a recent radio broadcast, David Atkinson, Chairman of MUFORN, said that he found it worrying that the passengers on board the British Airways B737 bound for Manchester had not attempted to sue BA over the alleged UFO incident and supposed near-miss. He also stated that he believed that "...the human race is some kind of genetic experiment....and I think they've been here a long time and that the governments of the world probably know about it as well...".

The group produces a periodical entitled 'The Source' which contains reprints of articles by Stanton Friedman as well as the "fascinating" character of 'Graham the Grey'.

If you believe in the ET Hypothesis and government conspiracies then MUFORN is clearly for you, so give Dave a call on the number at the top of the page.

Manchester Anomalous Phenomena Investigation Team (MAPIT)

Contact: Stephen Mera on 0161 905 3047

MAPIT was formed in 1995 by Stephen Mera, shortly after he joined NARO. After many vicissitudes and altercations , all is now sweetness and light on the MAPIT front. MAPIT consists of around 15 members. These members can now benefit from their chairmans considerable expertise - he's written an investigators course. Nice one, Steve!



Merseyside Anomalies Research Association (MARA)

Contact: Tony Eccles on 0151 486 6087

The Merseyside Anomalies Research Association is an informal group of people of all ages and backgrounds who wish to investigate and research the subject of the paranormal; people who are merely interested are also welcome. Investigative training is provided; with investigations being conducted in the members own time and at their own expense. MARA also has a witness support group with the aim of

allowing witnesses to talk freely about their experiences. I must stress that this is not a counselling group, nor is it medical or analytical. MARA is affiliated to NARO and BUFORA. I have attended a MARA meeting and I was very impressed with the well organised structure and attitude of the members.

British UFO Studies Centre (BUFOSC)

Contact: Eric Morris on 01606 552175

BUFOSC is run by former psychiatric nurse Eric Morris who has now retired from his profession to concentrate his energies into his latest venture; the Abduction Research Counselling Centre (ARCC). In a recent edition of the BUFOSC Journal "Intelligence"; Eric states that "...there appears to be an element of stupidity entering ufology at present, because modern day ufologists are just not equipped to deal with people who claim alien abduction", a statement with which I heartily concur. Unfortunately, Mr Morris has taken it upon himself to set up this 'sub-specialisation' as he calls it, and urges other groups to do the same. "We have received untold support from other UFO groups, especially those who have not been in operation for long.[emphasis added]. They realise their limitations when coming across these types of cases, and know who to refer them to." The 'ARCC' even goes as far as to delve into the sensitive area of counselling for infertility; "...They [abductions] are not easy to deal with, the subject may be confused at what has happened to them[sic], their families may be concerned, couples may be trying, and failing to have families."

The magazine goes on to review 'Signs of the Gods' by Erich Von Daniken; giving it a glowing review - "with some very strong arguments and questions which remain unanswered today".

Morris himself pens an article which argues that Jimi Hendrix was an abductee. Evidence

to support this demented theory comes in the form of Morris's analysis: "I believe Hendrix could have been an abductee , because Hendrix was a quiet, introverted boy..." He also raises suspicions regarding the cover of 'Electric Ladyland' (part one), "...which shows spaceships, futuristic 'Golf Balls' (Fylingdales?), an aircraft reminiscent[sic] of Concorde (Electric Ladyland was released in 1968!)"

So look out all quiet, introverted boys: the ARCC is coming to a lecture hall near you!

Skipton Extraterrestrial Research Into UFOs (SERIUS)

Contact Don Cooper on 0585 406772

With some UFO groups there is a degree of ambiguity with regard to their motivation in the investigation of UFO cases, however in the case of SERIUS, there is certainly no doubt whatsoever .

In a recent letter to 'UFO Reality', Don Cooper of SERIUS states, with regard to an article in the Sunday Times about Japanese plans to mine the moon: "...there should be plenty of fireworks when the first Japanese scout ships land there, only to find American bases already well established, and that mining authority has to be obtained from US Lunar real estate agencies...". He goes on to say, "...the underground facilities are going ahead full steam while the masses are fed poison food and allowed to die...". He finishes with : "if one views those documents [majestic 12] with an unprejudiced and open mind, they are very plausible."

Say no more.

Continued overleaf...

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see inside back cover

Northern Aerial Phenomena Studies

Contact Paul Earl: P.A.Earl@ais.salford.ac.uk
21 Daisy Lane, Lathom, Lancs, L40 4BS

This group, like NARO, are concerned with the scientific study of phenomena - in this case - aerial phenomena. The group is currently 'in limbo' because of lack of space to store equipment but they hope to back up again soon.

Stockport Ghost Society SGS

Contact: Scott at:
scottmac@budman.u-net.com

When I visited them over a year ago, they seemed a bit naive when dealing with cases - i.e. they believed anything: for example a photograph was being passed around which clearly showed a double exposure of a cardboard 'Halloween' skeleton. However they appear to have reformed themselves, and are worried they are only attracting crank reports from people who wish to move house! They are concerned that the lack of good cases will mean the group may fold through lack of interest.

The Lancashire UFO Society (LUFOS)

Contact: 01995 600186

On the inside cover of the LUFOS magazine entitled - 'The Grey Area' - it is stated that there is no substitute for factual and methodical research. It is also stated that the group is sceptical and that is why they are credible. They also describe as 'ludicrous' the 'theories' of Erich Von Daniken - all statements I concur with.

The group is currently occupied with research into the 'flying triangles' that have been reported throughout the north-west. LUFOS are convinced that these triangles are *terrestrial* in nature, and are being built in an American style 'skunk works' at the British Aerospace site in Warton. The major bulk of the magazine (the copy I have) is devoted to a study done by Tim Matthews into 'Britains Military UFO Program' - whatever that means; does it mean the British

government are developing a secret plane with the deliberate intent of the resulting aircraft being described as a UFO?!

Matthews argues that we have developed technology 'in the black', which can account for these sightings. He refers to secret scientists and engineers who have 'conquered the boundary layer'^[1]. One of the most intriguing points made by Matthews is his reference to an article published in Skywatch International which claims that the US Government has a helicopter which can "ascend at 5000ft per second by using an advanced electromagnetic photonic forcefield; which cocoons the craft enabling it to travel without the usual gravitational and inertial restrictions". Matthews claims that his contacts in "every area of industrial technology", insist that theoretically this has been possible for years. *If* scientists have conquered the boundary layer, even in secret, why have the academics in our top universities not also made these huge leaps in theoretical aerodynamics? ; and if so, why are we still spending vast sums of money designing 'conventional' aircraft like the Eurofighter and F-22? I would also like to know details of the theory behind the "electromagnetic photonic forcefield" which manages to solve all our problems with regard to the g-forces experienced by fast jet pilots, by cancelling them out. Why is such a system not in operation on a 'conventional' aircraft to give the pilots a more comfortable ride?

[1] - The boundary layer is a thin viscous layer of air which acts close to a body (such as an aircraft wing). Without it aircraft would be unable to fly.

The Manchester University Alien Contact Group '#'; '#.s' qds#q'ff."#"[]#####*((**[', #.!"\$£\$£\$£\$"\$\$!!!7427gibber,gibber - my old mans a mushroom: wibble.

Get the gist!

Andrew.P.Blunn

THE URMSTON ENCOUNTER

by Alicia Leigh

In this, the second instalment, we hear how Robert Shawe contacted Alicia via the local newspaper, and about the investigation that followed.

It appeared, initially at least, that this investigation would rely solely on witness testimony. It seemed fairly improbable that there would be any physical traces on the ground considering the amount of time that had elapsed since the sighting. Even so, I gathered soil and plant samples from inside and outside the affected area; I took photographs which seem to depict a circular shape. This appeared to be caused by the lack of normal plant growth, such as the four foot tall reeds which to this day, have not regrown within the area. Three trees to the east of the site also seemed to show heat damage; they were quite extensively burnt from the base to around fifty feet up the trunk. Bark samples were also collected for analysis which would hopefully enable us to determine a cause for this unusual occurrence.

With the help of Peter Hough, I was able to have a professional analysis carried out by the Environmental Science department of a local university. In the meantime I, along with fellow NARO investigator Anthony Eccles, interviewed Robert who was still struggling to account for his actions on that particular night.

Robert quite openly admitted that he did have an interest in the UFO phenomenon, that is until *after* the encounter when his interest dwindled. He was looking to us for a rational explanation, but of course at this stage of the investigation we were unable to speculate. We went through the usual lines of questioning during the initial interview; we also asked

questions which when answered by the witness, may have determined a particular theory put forward by the likes of Dr. Susan Blackmore or Albert Budden.

At all times Robert remained calm, he was obviously an intelligent rational person who could not make any sense of his experience.

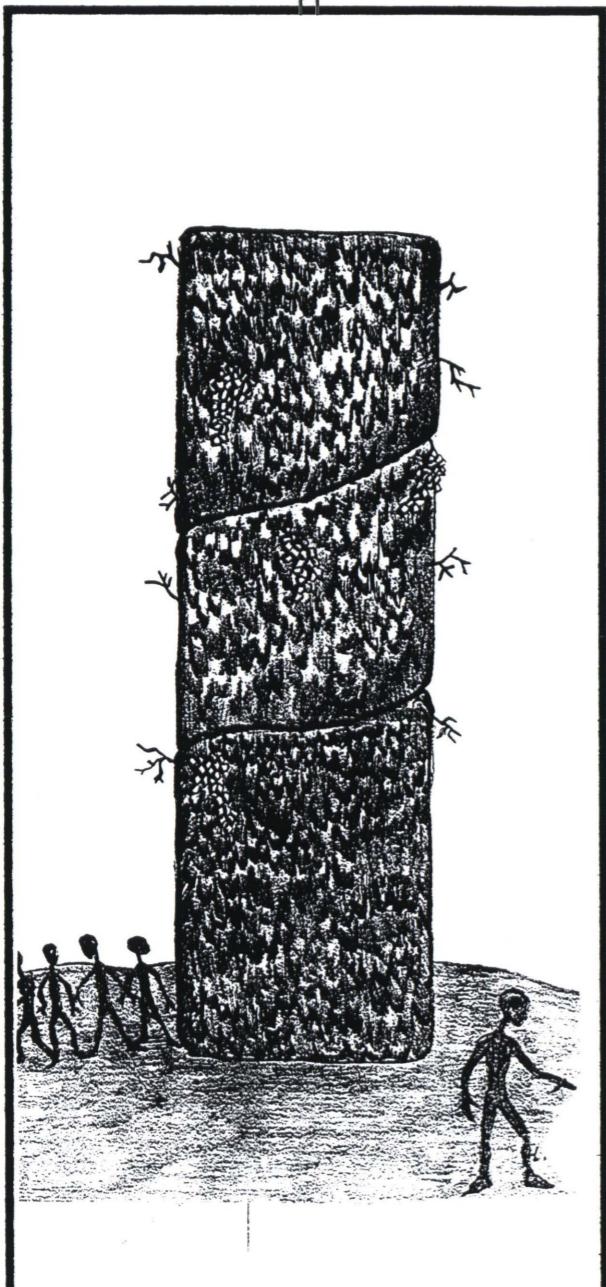
After several meetings it was suggested that he may like to try hypnosis as *a means of exploring his conscious memories of that night*. Robert took quite some time to make the decision to go ahead with hypnotherapy.

The results of the analysis had been sent through and I, along with Peter Hough, went to discuss them with the head of the department. The tree bark was confirmed to have been burnt by some kind of unidentifiable intense heat source; it was most interesting that the innards of the tree had been completely unaffected by this. The soil showed distinctly different mineral oil content between the controlled and affected samples. Outside the area, the number of milligrams of mineral oil per Kg of soil was 95% higher than inside the area. There did not appear to be a reasonable explanation to account for this. The PH balance or acidity of the soil was also quite different; however, it was pointed out that with river valley soils this could be considered as quite normal. It was suggested that we could have the ground tested for radiation but this was considered pointless.

I pursued the local taxi firm for conformation of Robert's booking whilst Anthony contacted Manchester Airport for details of flights made over Urmston that night. Unfortunately the taxi firm were unable to help unless the information was required for an official police investigation; however they did confirm, off the record, that there was a 'no-show' on December 25th. Air Traffic Control at Ringway stated that there were no flights in or around Urmston on the night in question.

Hypnosis was the next stage; this was carried out by a psycho-analyst who has been in practice for over twenty years. What transpired was rather interesting: Robert retraced his steps for the whole day and beyond - it became clear that he had ventured much further into the clearing. He was very uncomfortable at this point and made his way back home thirty feet away. Once inside his watch read 10.30pm yet he'd left to make the two minute journey 40 minutes earlier. He also told us his shoes were muddy yet consciously he'd only walked on the concrete path.

Following the hypnosis Robert was able to draw exactly what he'd seen as he perceived it.



You will see from his own drawing (shown below) that he paid particular attention to the craft, portraying the entities around it as being much less important. He felt that the column was organic in nature, yet once on the ground it appeared to be redundant. He claims that he spoke with the entity in the foreground - but as yet - he has not revealed this conversation.

Two years on, Robert does not like to be reminded of the incident and quashes any conversation about it.

Was Robert Shawe in contact with an alien culture on that Christmas evening? or was he simply a victim of his own mind - or was it neither of these. The case remains unexplained due to lack of further evidence, and will probably remain that way for some time to come.

To the left we can see the drawing made by Robert of the object he allegedly saw. Notice the 'organic' nature of the object as described by Robert, and how the entities are portrayed as much less important.

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UNIVERSAL SCIENCE

BY MERVYN GALE

The meeting was dissolving in convivial murmurs. The two young ufologists walked towards the window. When they reached it, they began chattering. If we had been permitted to eavesdrop, we might have heard something like this:-

"If you saw a strange triangle of metal flying past now, you too would consider it a real, nuts-and-bolts object. Any other notion would seem absurd", said one.

"I don't know. These 'triangles' are just a new version of something very old - old and playful, because it changes with every change in our technology. It mirrors our achievements, while mocking them at the same time. It arranges liaisons with us, but never turns up when its supposed to. It sometimes burns the ground, but the traces always seem to fade with the sunlight of a new day. We see it most often in times of crisis, social or political. Its an old symbol of our yearning for intervention from the skies; or our fear of invasion. Its one of our archetypes, something we share in our dreams. Maybe, just maybe, our minds can occasionally make it 'real' when we want it badly enough. Then, and only then, it soars in our skies as a real object would, and sometimes steals our children. But this is a phantom, half-reality at best: it never lasts longer than a fragile ornament in a room full of children. And it never lasts more than a moment on our detection devices."

"Bravo!" said the first ufologist, now put on his mettle. "What of the crashes-the wreckage?"

"Tin foil and gossamer. Stories told by the very old, and even then never at first hand. Do you really believe they fly to the stars in kites?"

At this juncture there came an interjection from a third ufologist, who had been biding his time in a corner.

"You're both off beam. The real point of our group, and all other groups like it everywhere, is all the pleasure we get from fighting. We like nothing better than to join committees and plot the creation of splinter groups behind the backs of our esteemed betters. To be furtive is our greatest joy, and slander is the pinnacle of our achievements. Yes, plotting is what 'ufology' was really invented for - and what have they been saying about *me* I wonder?"

Ufologist number two was clearly amused, for there was a mordant edge to his reply.

"And what of our 'aliens'. Do they, I would dearly love to know, see such strange signs and portents in *their* skies? Are they as baffled as us? Do their 'explanations' for these sky-borne nightmares say more about themselves than they do about the data? Do they - heaven forbid! - spend most of their time setting up earnest little groups with silly names that take themselves much too seriously?"

They all started laughing. It was amusing indeed to imagine the god-like pink and black aliens of popular mythology behaving in this unseemly fashion.

As the three friends left the meeting chamber, night was already falling. The rich, sable depths of darkness enveloped them as they stepped outside. Unfamiliar constellations shed a weak effulgence upon their grey skin and lustrous black eyes....

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MY OTHER COAT IS AN ANORAK

Anorak, the mere mention of the word and a picture evolves in your head; a hideous image of a spotty adolescent: clad in a green 'parka' and sporting a pair of 'sideways ironed' flares and a thermos flask. This, is the stereotype image - of an anorak.

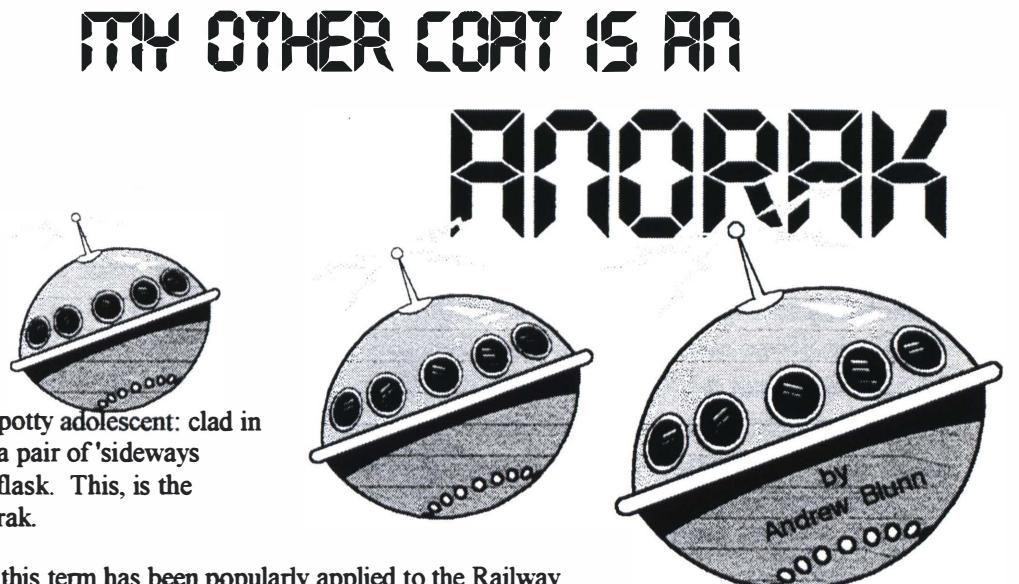
Since the start of the decade this term has been popularly applied to the Railway Enthusiast - better known as the trainspotter; a term held in contempt by thousands of spotters everywhere. A once popular hobby enjoyed by a large segment of the populous, is now something you have to admit to. The image has been seen on TV too - in the guise of Duane Dibley, a character created for the Red Dwarf comedy series. A typical anorak still lives at home (even though he's 40), has never had sex - or a girlfriend come to that: and spends his days at the extremist end of his subject - whatever it may be.

In a recent article in the Manchester Evening News, columnist Flic Everett was discussing, rather badly, the possibilities of extraterrestrial life. Ms Everett gleefully speculated that she would probably be deluged with letters from "...anoraks on X-Files headed notepaper..." ;well Flic, I have to admit, you're probably right.

The truth is out there

Ever since those immortal words: "the truth is out there" first graced our TV screens, there has been a phenomenal increase in the amount of interest of the general public in the paranormal and particularly the UFO phenomenon. The fact that this growth in interest has been confined to this particular pigeon hole comes as no surprise to me. The X-Files and its successors (such as Dark Skies) are continuing to present the subject as an exciting and glamourous, some might even say, sexy way. TV companies are jumping on the bandwagon faster than you can say 'Mulder and Scully', in a never ending quest to satisfy the publics demand for anything alien.

This growth in interest from the general public has seen an explosion in the number of UFO 'research' groups. In Manchester alone there has been a large increase in the number of small organisations. Unfortunately these groups do not offer an balanced view of the phenomenon, preferring instead to support the extraterrestrial hypothesis [ETH], even in the face of evidence to the contrary.



Most of the problems stem from the people who operate these UFO 'fan clubs'. They are, very often, people with no investigative experience whatsoever - and they often claim to be more qualified than they actually are. For example: Mr Todd Zechel, Director of Investigations for 'Ground Saucer Watch' in the USA, claimed to have been employed by the National Security Agency (NSA). During his 'service' he claimed to have discovered 'hard evidence' of a UFO cover up. Zechel's true curriculum vitae was far less impressive: he had in fact served with the US Army for 3 years; he then worked in a factory as a carpenter, and then as a fireman, before rounding off his illustrious 'career' as a sex shop employee.

It is often amusing to here ufologists recite their former occupations and how these vocations are apposite to their present activities. For example, I was recently conversing with the Chairman of a paranormal research group (which shall remain nameless) who claimed, amongst other things, to have authored 3 books on the paranormal.

He also related to me how he had once been called to repair televisions on an air force base; whilst there he was taken deep into the heart of the base (which, of course, was maximum security); apparently, he couldn't even go to the toilet alone. Aside from this incredible tale, the gentleman concerned has also claimed to have an Engineering degree; and to have acted as a consultant on the TV show 'Strange But True?'. It subsequently turned out that *not one* of these claims were genuine, and that the truth is far more mundane. But what of the members of this liar's group? - for it is them his influence will fall upon.

Ufology is also becoming a 'last chance saloon' for unremarkable scientists to make their 'everlasting' contribution to the advancement of mankind. In an interview with 'New Scientist' magazine, Dr. J. Allen Hynek said "...when I look back on my career, I've done damn little that was original...I've never launched any new theories; I've never made any outstanding discoveries...I guess I'm not very innovative." When he was told he would probably be remembered as the "...scientist who made UFOs respectable..." he said:

**I've done damn little that was original...
I've never made any outstanding discoveries....I guess I'm not very innovative...**

Dr.J.Allen Hynek

"...I wouldn't mind it. its always nice to add one stone to the total structure of science. If I can succeed in making the study of ufos scientifically respectable and do something constructive on it , then I would think that would be a real contribution..."

Pie in the Sky

In its desperation to become venerable, ufology continually searches for endorsement from the scientific community; unfortunately this never comes, and on the rare occasions there is a glimmer of hope - it becomes apparent that the 'specialist' concerned, is a long time 'believer' with a vested interest: like the proficient examiner who conducted Travis 'Fire in the Sky' Walton's lie detector test. Having had a test with one of the countries leading experts, who certified that Walton was lying (because, amongst other things, he had been holding his

breath to try to influence his test results), the investigators turned to another analyst for a 'second opinion' - which not surprisingly came up with

definitive proof that the experience was real. So what, if anything, is J. Public supposed to make of all this? Well, judging by the response at recent conferences, they are making quite a bit of it actually.

space tracking

In a recent article in 'Sightings Magazine', 'real life Fox Mulder' - Nick Pope, formerly of Air Staff 2A (the admin department that deals with UFO reports made by the public) says: "...yesterdays Ufologists might be found on a lonely hillside, armed with binoculars and camera. But tomorrow's Ufologists will be found at RAF bases, armed with *space tracking* radar systems." [emphasis added].

Space tracking radar systems? Radars that track space? His description of this new breed of ufologist sounds familiar doesn't it? Binoculars and cameras are often found in the hands of other spotters - such as bus spotters, plane spotters etc...But binoculars and cameras are not complex enough for the modern UFO anorak - as anyone who has been to a conference recently will tell you.

ADVERTISING IN NARO MINDED

The modern ufologist can now lay his/her hands on everything from night vision goggles, to Satellite Navigation systems, for a handsome sum of course. As well as this they can get hold of a large poster depicting the various different 'craft' that have paid a visit to our little planet over the years. All this is obviously *vital* purchasing for any respectable UFO group.

Acronyms

Trot along to any UFO conference and you will be greeted by a superabundance of visiting groups whose members *insist* on wearing their little identification badge - so that everyone knows that they're not just 'ordinary' members of the public; but that they are 'up there' at the forefront, dealing with UFOs day in, day out.

If you have ever bothered to read these badges you may have seen something similar to the one at the beginning of this article. Although the group name is more likely to be one that gives a suitable acronym, which rolls off the tongue with ease. Admittedly, 'NARO' has also fallen victim to this trait, before we were called the Northern Anomalies Research Organisation, we were the Manchester UFO Research Association (MUFORA). However, we didn't start with the letters NARO - and work back to the words; it was just a natural choice. With the exception of a few, most groups have a similar naming system: consider the following - MAPIT, MARA, LAPIS, BUFOSC, MUFON, LU-FOS, BUFORA, SERIUS. SERIUS stands for Skipton Extraterrestrial Research Into UFOS. This is quite an odd name as it doesn't make sense. The word extraterrestrial implies that any research undertaken by this group is done *off* this planet - obviously they have access to a superior equipment inventory than NARO. Personally, I am still waiting for the inaugural meeting of the Winsford And North Knutsford Extraterrestrial Research Society - it won't be long now!!

So are we all just sad people who have nothing better to do with their lives than stand on hillsides with night vision cameras and 'space tracking radars'?

Well I don't think we *all* are. However it is clear that ufology, at present, is littered with people, however well meaning, who are unintentionally making it less likely that we will ever make a breakthrough in identifying the *real* cause of UFOs, let alone convincing the general public of the validity of research into the phenomenon. For as Roman satirist Petronius states: "He will never do well, who easily believes".

Sources:

UFOs: The Public Deceived, Philip J. Klass

Prometheus, 1983

Sightings Magazine, Rapide Publishing 1997.

COMING IN SEPTEMBER!

THE NARO FILES 2

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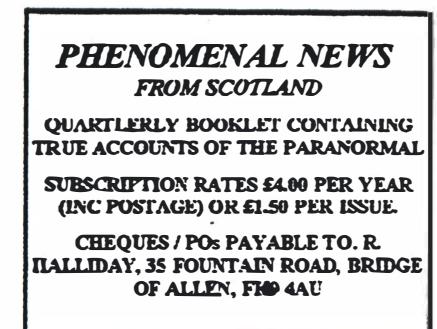
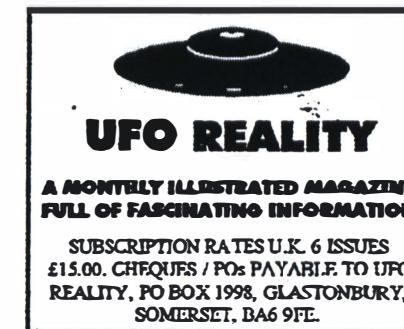
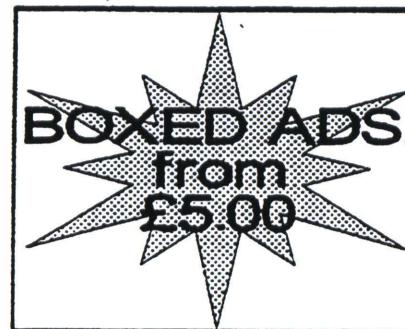
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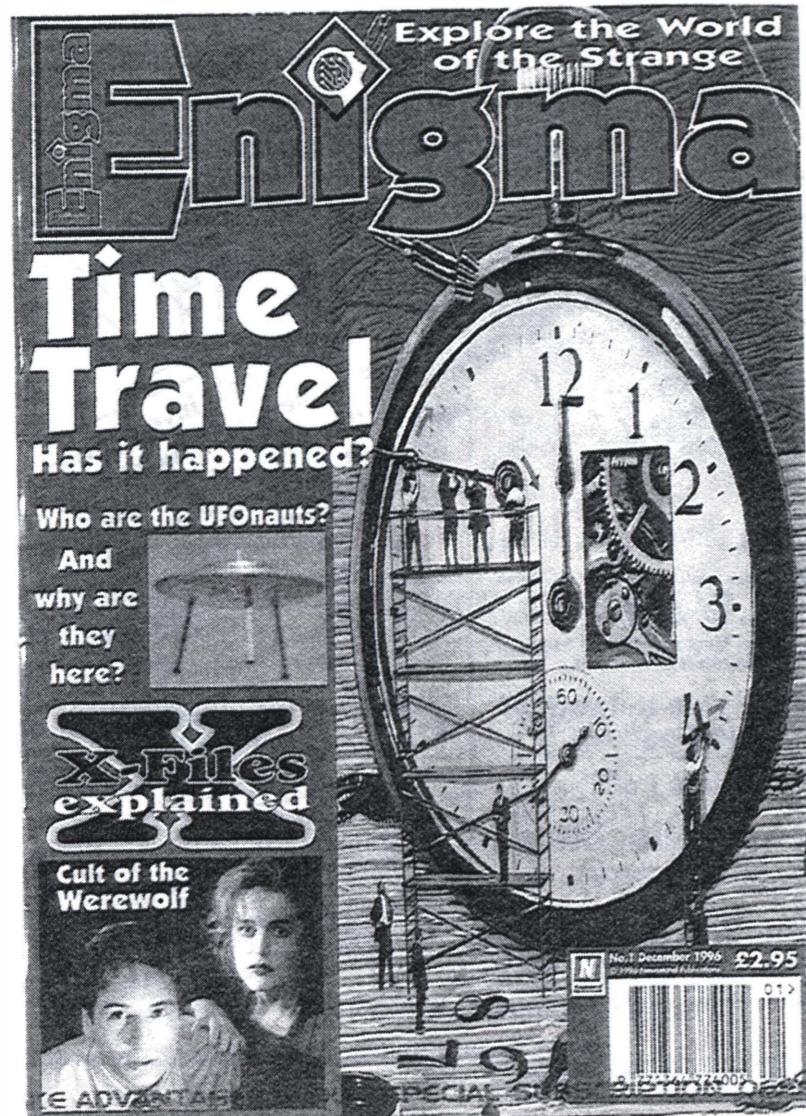
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The Alternative A to Z of the Paranormal

Mervyn Gale presents a cheaper alternative to all those £17.99
hardback coffee table encyclopedias...

A is for Ancient Astronauts. If a prehistoric cave painting looks a bit like a man in a spacesuit, then it must be a man in a spacesuit - well, no actually Erich.

B is for bilocation, as practised by the Venerable Mary of Jesus of Agreda a Seventeenth century nun who was seen in New Mexico 500 times despite never having left her Spanish convent. So, up yours, James Randi.

C is for coincidence.....c is for coincidence.....c is for coi

D is for Dardanelles. Various writers misleadingly claim that an English "regiment", the "First-Forth Norfolks" vanished into an odd, solid looking cloud during the Gallipoli campaign in 1915. Unfortunately the First-Fourth was not a regiment at all; the soldiers who *did* vanish were almost certainly either cut down by concentrated and accurate Turkish machine gun fire, or possibly murdered after surrendering. None of this prevents UFO Magazine from rehashing this sorry episode as if it were a genuine mystery in their June 1996 issue.

E is for Ectoplasm. Until, say, 1940 it was seen to exude from the nostrils, lips, nipples, and vaginas of mediums, in sometimes copious quantities. Currently unfashionable, it remains baffling - plastic yet ethereal. Baron Von Schrenck - Notzing - or "Shrink - at - Nothing" - a leading turn of the century investigator who turned his hands to, er, *probing* these luminous excrescences, was a leading gynaecologist; so presumably he understood, and explored, those recesses of young ladies bodies where cheese cloth or wax might fraudulently be secreted..

F is for Faery:what "Greys" were before they lost their sense of humour.

G is more Gaia, so we're all mummy's boys - or girls. Incidentally, Arthur Conan Doyle wrote a short story called "When the World Screamed" which anticipated this hippy idea of earth-as-organism by 50 years.

H is for Hallucination, which we all have, and perfectly healthy it is too.

I is for Identified Flying Objects, such as the Project Mogul Balloon which provided a retro-active meal ticket to old timers of Roswell New Mexico, when they decided to call it by another name.

J is for Jeanne D' Arc (1412 - 31): her school mates claimed she once flew through the air to win a childhood race in a meadow; but she was usually much more down to earth - even when speaking to angels. She was a soldier, fashion rebel, seer, and royal psychotherapist rolled into one: the most talented teenager of all.

K is for Klass, Philip J. Redoubtable sceptic and aviation expert whose books appal mainstream ufology - his patient, lengthy demolition jobs on iconic cases have made him the "unperson" of the incestuous saucer-nauts lecture circuit.

L is for Lincoln, Abraham (1809 - 65) who held seances in the White House, and had a precognitive dream about his own body lying-in-state.

M is for Menwith Hill - super-secret Yorkshire intelligence base. A magnet for ufological charabanc trips, complete with scary signs on the perimeter fence.

N is for Nostradamus, Michel De (1503 - 66) whose inscrutable quatrains defy consistent interpretation - not that that has ever stopped anyone.

O is for Ouija, two words for "yes" joined together - so why not Non-nein instead?

P is for Philip, an imaginary 17th century aristocrat dreamed up as a jocular experiment by the Toronto SPR in the late 1970s. "He" communicated by raps and table movements, apparently paranormal in nature, blithely unaware of his own doubtful ancestry. His improbable feats culminated in him "walking" a free standing table up some steps, unaided, on live television. Did he merely represent a spectacular one off example of group telekinesis and wish fulfilment - or was an intangible being masquerading as "Philip" rather as we might try on a new suit of clothes?

Q is for Quantum Physics, wherein Newton's "Principia" gives way to, say, Lewis Carroll's "Hunting of the Snark". Consider Bell's Inequality Theorem, or "non-locality": one particle interacting with another without any time passing, or any transfer of energy between the two. If reality were a record shop, Newton would be "Easy Listening", and these new boys would be imported Psychedelia.

R is for Rosenheim, Bavaria. In 1967 a lawyer's offices at 13, Konigstrasse were subjected to intensive poltergeist activity: light fittings swung violently, pictures rotated, electric bulbs exploded, and phones rang mysteriously. All of this occurred within office hours and was most violent and prolonged when teenager Anne-Marie Schneider arrived on the premises - desk drawers opened by themselves and chairs moved. Significantly she detested both her work and her boss: did the events she unwittingly caused reflect this? A classic modern case. Physicists from the Max Planck Institute were baffled.

S is for Serios, Ted, the 1960s "thoughtographer" par excellence. This alcoholic hotel porter produced images on unexposed film that deviated from preselected targets in suggestive ways: they included weird distortions and idiosyncratic misspellings, as well as realistic dream-images of things Serios had never seen - such as a Russian satellite, or experimenter Jules Eisenbud wearing clothes he did not possess! The ancient belief that thoughts have a quasi-independent life of their own finds a strong echo in such astounding feats. James Randi's ritualistic accusation of fraud - Serios insisted on pointing a hollow cardboard tube at the camera - would only be tenable if Eisenbud, an experienced doctor, had omitted to take the most elementary precautions. He did not.

T is for Teleesthesia, the perception of material things, or conditions, from a distance. Not quite synonymous with clairvoyance, as no visual imagery need be involved. F.W.H. Myers (1843 - 1901) the psychologist, poet and polymath who coined the words telepathy and telekinesis was responsible for the idea. An example: a Mrs Fussey of Wimbledon felt a stinging pain in a portion of her upper arm in November 1914. The persistent pain later seemed to be related to the fact, then unknown to her, that her son had just been shot in precisely the same part of his arm on the Western front.

U is for Uranus. Sniggers aside, the astronomical symbol for this planet with a rude name was seen on the underbelly of the "UMMO" flying saucer near Madrid in 1967. Unfortunately strings were subsequently detected in computer enhanced photos taken at the time. However metal rods containing an odd liquid, and strips of a plastic then only available to NASA were allegedly found at the site. (the plastic was polyvinyl fluoride)

V is for Villas Boas, Antonio: his aliens, or at least one of them, proved to be more fun than the greys. A little blonde from the stars bestowed on Antonio the honour of interstellar genital contact, grunting "like an animal" all the while. This case demonstrates how much more entertaining ufology was forty years ago than now; how much more unpredictable and interesting the entities were prepared to be.

W is for Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton Ohio. If you were offered secretarial work here, you would be well advised to actually check which filing cabinets actually *were* filing cabinets. Just see if they are cold to the touch.

X is for Xenoglossy, the ability to speak in languages one hasn't learned or doesn't recognise - not to be confused with Glossalia, or "speaking in tongues" - barking, clicking, or howling rapidly, with optional grunting and stuttering: Mr Stanton T. Friedman, the gentle giant of ufology, usually responds to criticism from Philip J. Klass in a similar fashion.

Y is for Yowie, Antipodean "manimal", a kind of outback yeti.

Z is for Zeta-Reticuli, so drop your strides and prepare for the probe...

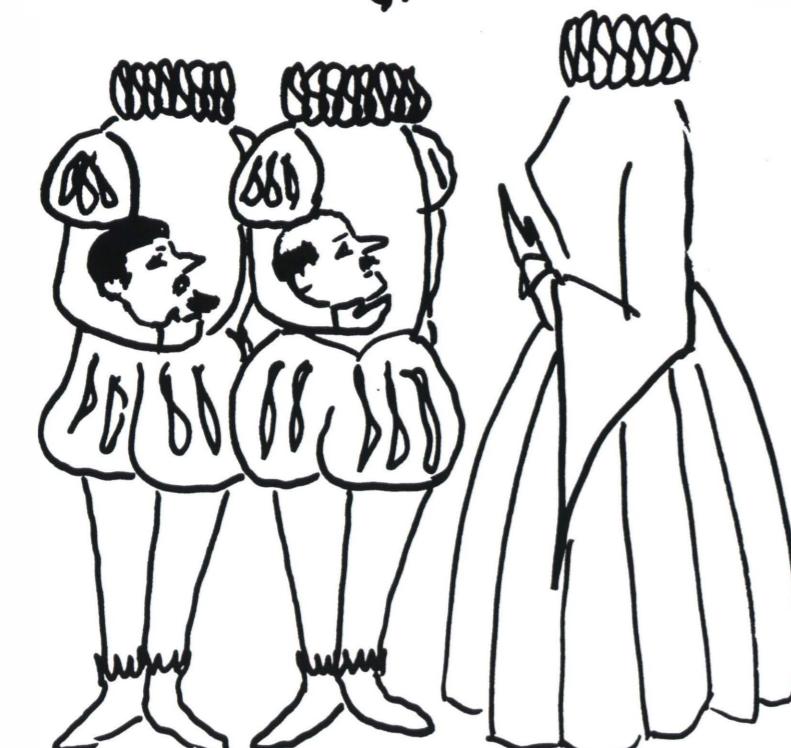
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"UFOs: the complete sightings catalogue" Peter Brookesmith 1995.

Conrad & Jasper



"DO'NT GET YOUR BLOOMERS IN A TWIST
WE'LL FIND YOUR HEAD FOR YOU"

UNBELIEVABLE!

Alicia Leigh reviews the latest conference to be held by the Lancashire UFO Society (LUFOS) which was billed as 'unbelievable'; did it live up to expectations? Read on to find out.....

First to speak was DIGAP investigator

Steve Balon, or 'baloney' as he is dubbed by some researchers, for reasons that shall become clear as you read on.

He produced a photograph taken by a professional photographer of Rivington Pike, Lancashire. It shows a distance shot of the pike and an apparent 'triangular' shaped UFO to the right of it. According to the photographer, the UFO was not visible at the time; it was only spotted after he had the film developed. The image of the 'craft' is quite distorted which makes it virtually impossible to identify.

Quest International commissioned an analysis which led them to claim that the image was that of a swan in flight. Steve Balon made an even more ridiculous assumption by stating that he believed this 'craft' was actually produced by British Aerospace at their Wharton facility. He claimed that this is the prototype of a secret military aircraft project named HALO (High Agility Low Observability); but surely a cloaking device is exclusive to the Klingons or Romulans of Star Trek fame? Quite frankly I would be more inclined to say, 'will the person with the hanglider please step forward'. Balon also showed video footage of various other lights in the sky, none of which were very impressive - indeed one of them was nothing more than the lens mechanism of a camera. A member of the audience very kindly pointed this out to him when he said he didn't know what it was. The last piece of video was the most hilarious hoax I have ever seen since the 'landed alien spacecraft' in 'Beadles About'. It Starts with a still of the night sky and then, as if by magic, a foil covered cardboard cut out on string appears! I could not believe that he was

taken in by this; I was more convinced by the shaky computer generated saucers in Tim Burton's Sci-Fi farce 'Mars Attacks!'.

Balon then proceeded to 'let us in' on the Ilkley Moor case which, according to him, was investigated entirely by himself and the chairman of DIGAP Arthur Tomlinson. For the benefit of those who are not familiar with the case; an ex-police officer encountered and photographed a strange green entity on top of Ilkley Moor. Although Tomlinson and Balon were present, along with Peter Hough, at the initial interview - this was the full extent of their involvement in the case. The investigation, analysis and regression were all arranged by Peter Hough. The only other part Balon played was to sell the story to the 'News of the World' without the permission of the witness.

He went on to cover an incident on Silpho Moor, Yorkshire, in which a two foot saucer shaped 'craft' was retrieved by civilians. This turned out to be an elaborate hoax that would have been quite expensive to perpetrate. Balon suggested that a scientist friend of his had created an advanced propulsion system by deciphering the glyphs contained inside the 'saucer'. He then boasted of the importance of this man and showed some diagrams of this so called 'anti-gravity' device. He declined to go into detail which gave me the impression that he did not understand the Physics of something which is obviously pertaining to pseudo-science. The glyphs were actually interpreted by a dialectician and the message read like a conversation between two 'aliens' complaining about our strange planet - as well as asking that question which has confounded mankind since the dawn of time - why do human women

wear clothes?

Seasoned researcher Jenny Randles presented a very interesting lecture in which she occupied the middle ground, leaving the audience to make up their own minds. She also commented that Nick Pope, ex-secretariat of Air Staff 2a, was less involved with UFO investigations than he claims - regardless of whether he makes this statement unwittingly or not. Well said!

Tim Matthews, a relative newcomer to ufology, and our host for the day, took great delight in driving the 'facts' home regarding the recent spate of triangular UFOs sighted in the North-West - which he attributes to the British government. This, to my mind, still does not explain why this so called 'aircraft' is operating in close proximity to civilian airliners in the main flight corridor of this country.

Unfortunately I was unable to hear the last speaker, who was a Doctor involved with the SETI programme. I believe he spoke recently at a conference in Manchester's G-Mex centre and that he was very good.

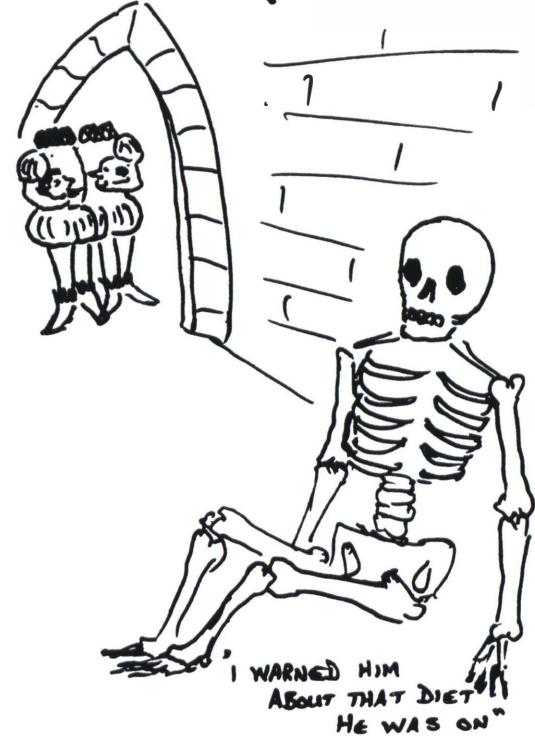
I missed this fortuitous event because my feet were killing me. Although I'd paid for a ticket well in advance of the day, I was unable to locate a seat, which resulted in my having to stand all day!

Overall, if you enjoy the thrill of government conspiracies then this was the one for you. If however, like me, you dislike standing up all day hearing the same old theories being spouted time and time again, then you would have avoided it. I was grateful for one thing however, unlike some recent conferences, this one definitely lived up to its billing.

Alicia Leigh

Alicia Leigh will be appearing at the forthcoming X-Files convention in Manchester in July.

Conrad & Jasper
by hc



IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE NORTHERN ANOMALIES RESEARCH ORGANISATION,

PLEASE CONTACT THE SECRETARY AT THE ADDRESS AT THE FRONT OF THIS ISSUE.

CAROLE'S CURIOSITY CORNER

By Carole Morse

A recent article has come to light from the Belfast Telegraph. Jonathan Rainey from Carickfergus, County Antrim, has the ability to cause electrical interference wherever he goes. Many claim that he generates lots of static electricity - the reason behind the havoc. He first noticed his ability when he was at school, when all the calculators went crazy. He has also witnessed his mobile telephone combust, and his car stop. All this happened within fifteen seconds. His unreliability brought about his dismissal, as he could never guarantee to arrive at work on time. His car has repeatedly broken down. He was given a replacement vehicle as his car had spent more time in the garage than on the road. The replacement car has broken down 26 times in under four months. He was told that his static electricity was disrupting the message from the remote control hand switch to the car. For now, things aren't too bad. He has borrowed a Renault Clio which does not have an immobiliser fitted.

GREAT BALLS OF BLUE FIRE

During August 1996 a gentleman named Mr Rutter awoke to witness a large flash of Blue light emanating from outside his bedroom window. The flash only occurred for a second or two. This was followed by another flash lasting about the same time.

Mr Rutter threw back his covers and grabbed his nightgown and headed down-

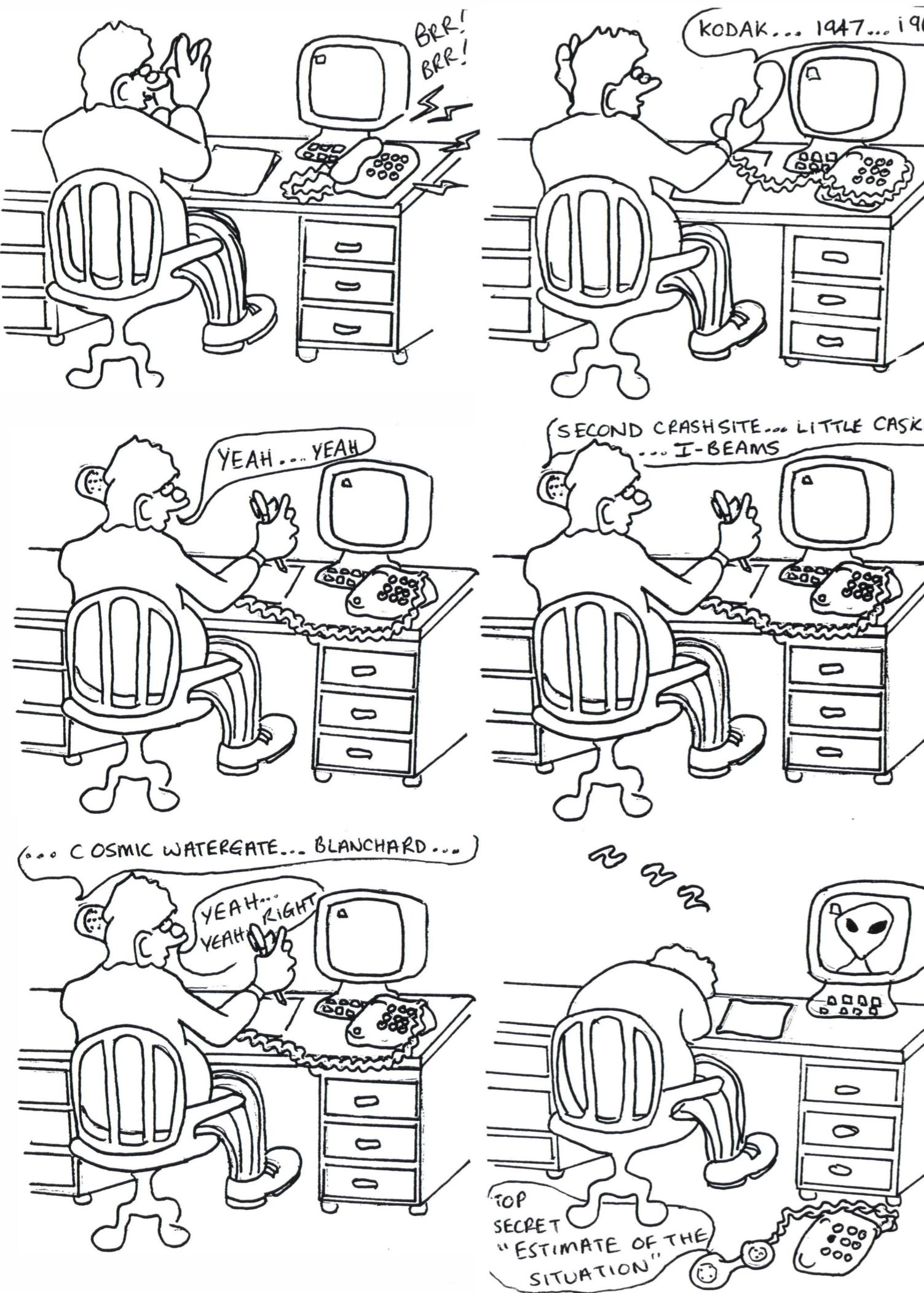


stairs and out the back door to find out what had awakened him. Suddenly he heard a rushing sound and an object the size of a golfball shot down from the sky, zig-zagged, and disappeared as it fell near his fence. NARO investigators were contacted and it wasn't long before a suitable conclusion was reached. On contacting the Met Office, it was apparent that a small meteorite storm occurred between 3.15 and 3.35am, and it was this that Mr Rutter had witnessed. Mr Rutter was given our conclusion and he was happy to find a rational explanation.

MANCHESTER HEAD SLAPPING POLT

A family in Manchester had been plagued by the paranormal for years. They had lived in their large four bedroomeed house for several years, and it was only when the incidents became malevolent that the family fled their home. It was said that a relative was slapped across the face by an invisible hand, and the finger marks could clearly be seen. The last straw was when the father of the household was found unconscious on the floor. He had been hit around the head. No explanation was ever found. Unfortunately the house is now no longer standing, and the memories of what took place there lie deep of the consciousness of the witnesses.

Your Stories to: Carole Morse, 31 Carrslea Close, Radcliffe, Manchester, M26 4NP



The History of the Poltergeist

by Stephen Mera

The word 'poltergeist' means 'noisy spirit' in German, and this particular phenomenon has been recorded for many years. This is probably the most terrifying and destructive of all paranormal activity.

British 'ghosthunter' Harry Price didn't hold back his adjectives. Price stated that Poltergeists can be cruel and spiteful, and that "a ghost haunts and poltergeists infests". Perhaps the haunting phenomenon is not related to the poltergeist phenomenon at all. Some scientific establishments refer to this activity as being caused by a suppression of sexual energy, which is often found in adolescents.

Poltergeists are known to have attempted communication audibly or by writing, even though most messages are malicious. Do these incidents occur from a single entity or from within the witnesses themselves? Children have been known to have been attacked or maimed by unseen forces, also flying projectiles. Houses have been plagued with a constant pelting of small rocks and stones. Formings are also known to occur during this type of activity, such as, water, oil, tar, and even on the odd occasion, blood.

In the Atlanta home of Mr and Mrs Wilson, blood appeared on the walls and floors. The blood eventually vanished just as mysteriously as it appeared. A sample of the blood was taken only to reveal that it was human-type 'O'. Mr and Mrs Wilson are both blood type 'A'. No rational explanation was ever found.

In 1889, the Dagg family of Quebec, Canada, were plagued by a disruptive spirit. An eleven year old girl called Dinah, who had been adopted, was physically attacked by an unseen force, and she claimed to hear it speak to her on more than one occasion. When she asked if anyone was there, she often heard a reply. A visitor went with her to the wood shed, where Dinah had claimed to have heard this strange voice. Again when she asked, 'is anyone there', the voice of an old man could clearly be heard speaking obscenities. The voice also said, "I am the devil. Get out or I'll break your neck." The following day a crowd gathered to hear the voice. They were not disappointed. However, some were embarrassed when the spirit started revealing intimate secrets.

In 1977 in Enfield, London, a rasping male voice was heard coming from another eleven year old girl. The most astonishing claim was that her vocal chords were not being used. The voice claimed to be that of a dead man. Again it was abusive. The voice was listened to for two hours by investigators. Poltergeists use all sorts of ways to communicate with witnesses or researchers.

In a poltergeist infested house in Ireland, the unseen force communicated using raps. One of the founders of the Society for Psychical Research, Sir William Barrett, discovered that the rapping noises responded to his mental requests. He would think of a number and ask the poltergeist to knock that many times. He tried this four times successfully. This apparent ability of ghosts to communicate by rapping led to the development of table tilting - the method used by mediums to receive alleged information from the spirit world.

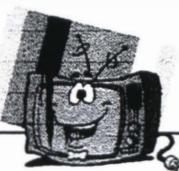
Poltergeist behaviour usually consists of rappings and *baggings* levitation, disembodied voices, physical contacts, temperature changes, 'formings' and manifestations. There are various other kinds of annoying disturbances which there are too many to list. On many occasions the poltergeist phenomena burned themselves out, and normally do not last longer than a year. A poltergeist seems to be intelligent in design and sometimes mistaken for hauntings. However there are theories that hauntings and the poltergeist phenomenon are one and the same.

In many ways, poltergeists seem to be very mischievous and like to play tricks just as if they were children. Unfortunately a recent survey shows that only 12% of investigations are done by competent outsiders. The activity itself is most intense in the evening. Most poltergeist activity is a house centred phenomenon. However, they have been known to follow the focus to their place of work. A focus is when investigators suspect that a member of the household is the focus of activity. Most of the time, if a focus is found, it's usually a child or adolescent. However this is not always the case. Activity has been known to take place wherever the focus is at that time.

The Almost Paranormal Power of the Media

by

Robert



Tollman

Once upon a time the BBC first aired a show called *Casualty*, a dramatic representation of life (not too surprisingly) in the Accident and Emergency Unit of a fictional hospital. The resulting success of the show caused a significant increase in the number of applicants for potential nurses who probably wanted to be like Charlie (or perhaps even Megan - remember her!?).

A few years later a series called *London's Burning* was aired on the ITV networks; this also proved to be a great advertisement for a profession, and the number of fire brigade applicants apparently virtually doubled. Now we have the *X-Files* and, although the only representation of reality in this series is the fact that the FBI exists, it seems there has been a huge increase in the number of paranormal investigators. Coincidence? I think not.

Yes, now it seems *UFO/GHOST/PSYCHIC* investigation groups are sprouting up all over the country and the demand to join already established research groups is on the up.

The problem is the amount of seemingly paranormal activity Britain has to offer is becoming far outweighed by the number of people willing to investigate it.

When a man by the name of Gary Theys recently decided to form yet another society in Liverpool he not unreasonably advertised his meeting in the local paper. Approximately 250 applicants turned up!

Now imagine each of those applicants going on to investigate a case (bearing in mind these people are just from one society of many in the north-west alone) not to mention all the members of other organisations, and you'll begin to find more investigators than investigated! Britain is frankly too normal to offer a different Enfield or Rendlesham every day! So will we soon see a case (as I believe is already beginning to happen) of feuding between rival groups as they all rush to get to the same investigation?

In the long term, are we to become a nation of paranormal investigators with no-one but each other to investigate? Good news for the commercial enterprises who start to throw out designer haunted houses or UFO landing fields (not that this hasn't been done already!), bad news for anyone who has a genuine unusual experience and find themselves addressing a multitude! Personally, I don't think it will come to that but never the less the current growing number of enthusiasts is already starting to present problems.

Already certain airports, usually the first port of call for UFO researchers, have closed their doors to people requesting air traffic information for a particular time. One can hardly blame them as the situation must be getting to the point where they can hardly send up a plane without getting a letter off someone a week later asking what shape size and colour it was!

This is unfortunately little comfort to the serious researcher who often has few other sources of information from which to draw conclusions. At the moment however, the number of witnesses to unexplained occurrences has significantly increased too; a clear indication of the hype that both media and the *X-Files* itself has brought to the general public. Some may argue that this is a good thing, pointing out that the increase in reports is due to the fact that people are no longer in fear of ridicule. After all, Not only is the paranormal becoming socially acceptable, but even, some would say, quite fashionable.

How long before we get an inside look at Adamski's spacecraft in *Hello Magazine*? Certainly we cannot be far from the days when people will be wandering down Oxford Street asking one another for experiences, and those, like myself, who haven't ever seen or heard anything they couldn't explain (Oh Doctor Beeching! not included!) branded as social outcasts or even worse heretics.

However, while more people feel encouraged to report strange activities whereas once they may have been reluctant, so too are the ones who (sometimes quite innocently) jump onto the paranormal bandwagon. That is to say, a large number, when faced with something minor they can't explain - for example, an odd pin-prick of light in the sky - instead of doing what most have done for years, and assuming it to be very explainable, will cry out "paranormal", or, in the case of the example, "the aliens are coming!".

Okay, maybe a slight exaggeration but the point is real. How many times have we heard a part of our house creak in the middle of the night, but dismissed it as a mouse, the wind, vibrations, or (one of my favourite expressions) the house just settling down?

The more susceptible however, may take the Mulder approach. The wonderful thing about the fictional Fox Mulder is the way he jumps to the most absurd conclusions about many things (which do not necessarily entirely defy rational explanation) and yet time and time again is

proved right. While this is most entertaining, it offers a rather ill-advised role model to the public. If we all acted like Fox in reality, I doubt we would have progressed very far in life. Apply Mulder conclusions to everyday occurrences and see what you get: why is the bus late? Its been abducted by the greys to study human public transport environments! What was that creak downstairs? Obviously a mad axe-wielding member of the undead out to eat someone's brains! In reality this is absurd, but in the *X-Files* you'd be absolutely right!

There is a huge up surge in reports and investigators to follow them up is already beginning to cause problems.

If Fox and Scully ever do get it together I often wonder whether Fox will come up with a paranormal reason, should he underperform in bed! No doubt Scully would write a report about it.

Robert Tollman





'I never thought this would happen when we called Jesse Marcel a liar.'

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